



*Appointed Policy Makers in
State Government*

**GLASS CEILING IN GUBERNATORIAL
APPOINTMENTS, 1997-2007**

A Report of the  Center for Women in Government & Civil Society
University at Albany, State University of New York
Summer 2008



Executive Summary

The glass ceiling remains intact for women appointed policy leaders in the executive branch of most state governments.

- The percentage of top-ranking executive leadership positions held by women has increased, but not by much. By 2007, women held 35% of executive posts, compared to 28% in 1997.
- On the other hand, there is some evidence of women’s more significant progress: 26 of the 50 states reached a higher level of gender representativeness in the executive branch of state government in 2007 than in 1997. Gender representativeness at the .75 level or higher was reached in 15 states. Governors in six states - Alaska, Connecticut, Montana, Nevada, Vermont, and Washington - have appointed women to top-ranking posts at the representativeness level of .90 or higher. 1.0 = full representativeness.
- With respect to race and ethnicity, the demographics of executive branch policy leaders changed very little between 1997 and 2007. Eighteen states are still below the halfway point in achieving full representativeness; 14 states have achieved representativeness at the .75 level or higher.
- Between 1997 and 2007, governors appointed substantially more women as department heads (9 percentage points more), but only 2.4 percentage points more women as their closest staff advisors. Women remain underrepresented at the helm of executive agencies and in governors’ executive offices.
- Over the 11-year period from 1997-2007, the percentage of women top advisors increased by a mere 2.4 percentage points. By 2007, the total number of white women in governors’ offices in all 50 states increased by only 16. For African American, Latina, and American Indian women, the gain in numbers was stunningly low: 1, 3, and 3 respectively. Asian American women lost three positions.
- Agencies in functional areas traditional for women - health, labor/human resources, public welfare/employment security, civil/human rights, and education - continue to have the highest concentration of women department heads. At the same time, nationally, the highest number of women exercising executive leadership in any functional area is in the somewhat nontraditional budget/finance/administration category.

Notes on Terminology

Policy leaders: top-ranking executive branch leaders appointed by governors, including department heads and top advisors.

Department heads: #1 appointee at the helm of agencies, offices, departments, boards, commissions and authorities.

Top advisors: policy influencing members of governors’ executive offices.

Glass ceiling: “the invisible barrier that blocks women from advancing to senior leadership positions...” [U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission report, 1993]

Representativeness ratio (rep. ratio) documents the degree to which different groups in the population are represented as appointed policy leaders. The rep. ratio for women policy leaders, for instance, is calculated by dividing the percentage of policy leader positions to which women are appointed by the percentage of women in the state’s population. A rep. ratio of 1.0 = full representativeness. Full representativeness is achieved when the demographic composition of top-ranking appointees mirrors that of the general population. A rep. ratio of less than 1.0 reflects the degree to which a group is underrepresented in top policy positions.

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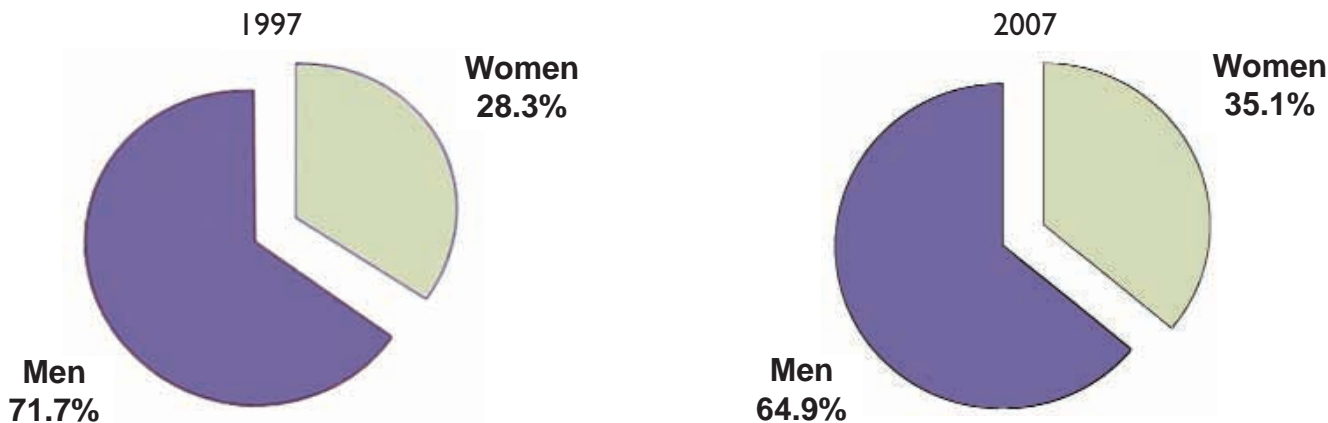
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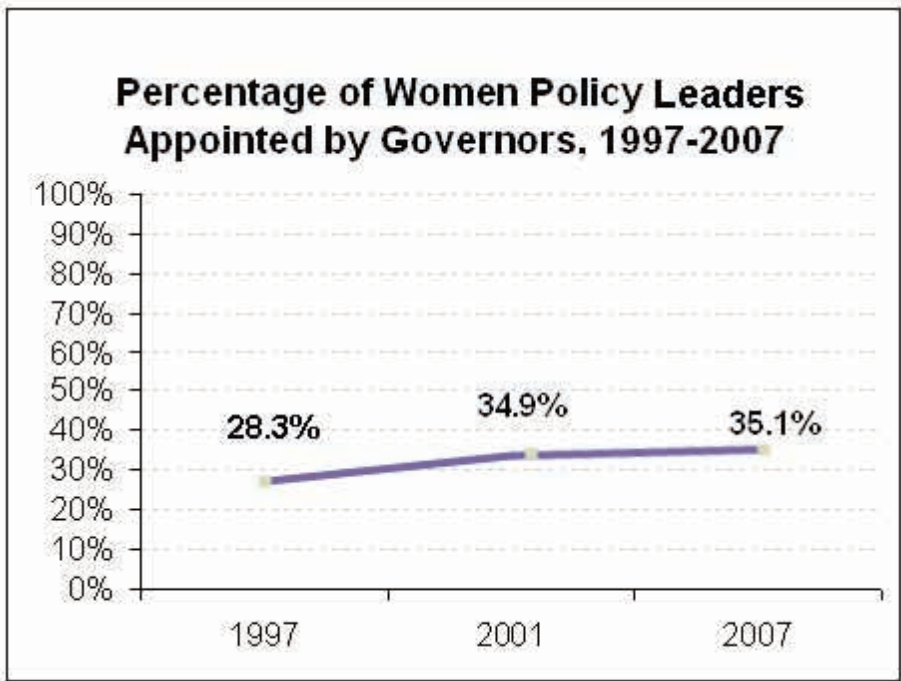
Policy Leaders

Policy Leaders by Gender, 1997-2007



The percentage of top-ranking executive leadership positions held by women has increased, but not by much. In 1997, governors in the 50 states appointed women to 28.3% of executive posts; in 2001, the percentage was 34.9%; by 2007 the percentage had moved upward only .2 percentage points to 35.1%. This constitutes a modest 6.8 percentage point change over the 11-year period.

On the other hand, there is some evidence of women’s more significant progress into appointed policy leader positions: 26 of the 50 states reached a higher level of gender representativeness in the executive branch of state government in 2007 than in 1997. [See Table, p. 7]

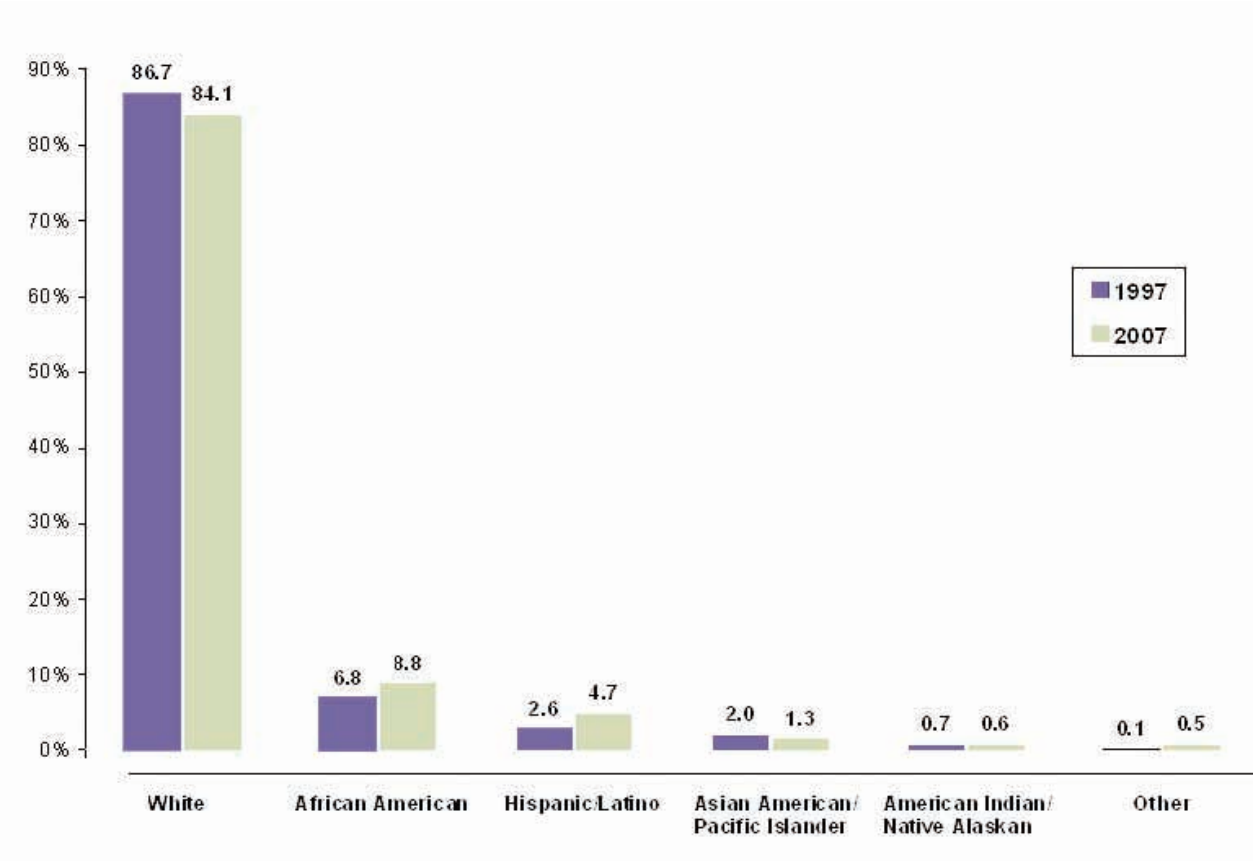


Policy Leaders

Nationally, Governors Still Appoint Few Women and Men of Color To Executive Policy Leadership Posts

Even as the 2000 U.S. Census recorded substantial changes in the race and ethnicity composition of the U.S. population, the demographics of executive branch policy leaders changed very little. Between 1997 and 2007, Latinos/as and African Americans experienced gains of 2.1 and 2.0 percentage points respectively. Asian Americans and American Indians actually lost ground, .7 and .1 percentage points. Appointees in the Other category increased by .4 percentage points.

Race and Ethnicity of Policy Leaders Appointed by Current Governors, 1997 and 2007



Gender, Race and Ethnicity of Policy Leaders Appointed by Governors, 1997-2007

Total Appointees	1997 ¹		2007	
	#	%	#	%
	1,806	100	1,834	100
Men				
White	1,135	62.8	1,014	55.3
African American	75	4.2	93	5.1
Hispanic/Latino	35	1.9	60	3.3
Asian American/Pacific Islander	26	1.4	13	0.7
American Indian/Native Alaskan	11	0.6	6	0.3
Other	1	0.1	5	0.3
Total	1,283	71.0	1,191	64.9
Women				
White	431	23.9	528	28.8
African American	48	2.7	68	3.7
Hispanic/Latino	12	0.7	26	1.4
Asian American/Pacific Islander	10	0.6	11	0.6
American Indian/Native Alaskan	2	0.1	5	0.3
Other	1	0.1	5	0.3
Total	504	27.9	643	35.1

¹Due to some missing racial/ethnic data, percentages do not total 100% and numbers do not sum to the total.

Although little change has taken place in the overall number of top-level appointed positions, some shifts did occur in the demographic composition of executive policy leaders. Among this group, white women held almost 100 more posts in 2007 than in 1997. The number of African American women appointees increased across the country by 20 to 68; Latina appointees gained 14 positions, from 12 in 1997 to 26 in 2007. Asian American and American Indian women experienced slight gains. White, Asian American, and American Indian men occupied fewer executive jobs in 2007 than in 1997. Latinos held 25 more leadership posts; African American men gained 18 positions nationwide.

Department Heads

Between 1997 and 2007, governors appointed substantially more women as department heads. The percentage of women chief executives increased by 9 percentage points, the largest increase recorded in the 2007 data. Still, women remain underrepresented at the helm of executive agencies.

In 15 states, the number of women department heads doubled or more than doubled during this period. These states are: Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Washington, West Virginia. The number of women department heads dropped in 11 states. In Alabama, Iowa, and North Carolina, women lost over half the number of leadership posts they held in 1997.



¹ Due to some missing racial/ethnic data, percentages do not total 100% and numbers do not sum to the total.

Department Heads by Gender and Function, 2007

Functions ¹	Men		Women	
	#	%	#	%
Total Appointees	876	67.8	416	32.2
Budget/Finance/Administration	161	66.5	81	33.5
Utilities/Transportation/Highways	75	77.3	22	22.7
Public Welfare/Employment Security	64	55.2	52	44.8
Police/Public Safety/Military/Law Enforcement	101	91.8	9	8.2
Fire Protection	8	88.9	1	11.1
Natural Resources/Environmental Conservation/Agriculture	143	74.9	48	25.1
Health	66	49.6	67	50.4
Economic Development/Housing	42	75.0	14	25.0
Corrections	65	75.6	21	24.4
Labor/Human Resources	43	50.6	42	49.4
Education	26	60.5	17	39.5
Civil/Human Rights	15	55.6	12	44.4
Other ²	67	69.1	30	30.9

¹ Selection of functions is based on the functional categories used by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, the Council of State Governments and Nelson C. Dometrius, "Minorities and Women among State Agency Leaders." *Social Science Quarterly*, 1984, pp. 127-137.

² Other includes such functions as Arts Council, Animal Health, Equalization Board, Architects Board, Consumer Affairs, Cultural Affairs, Elections Administration, Ethics, Information Officer, Credit Union, Emergency Management, Gaming Officials, Horse Racing, Lottery, Public Broadcasting, and State Fair.

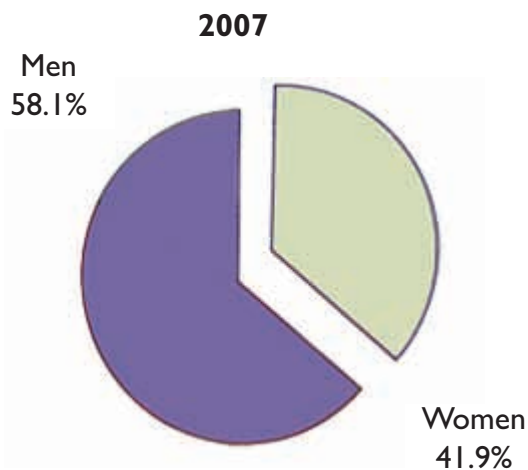
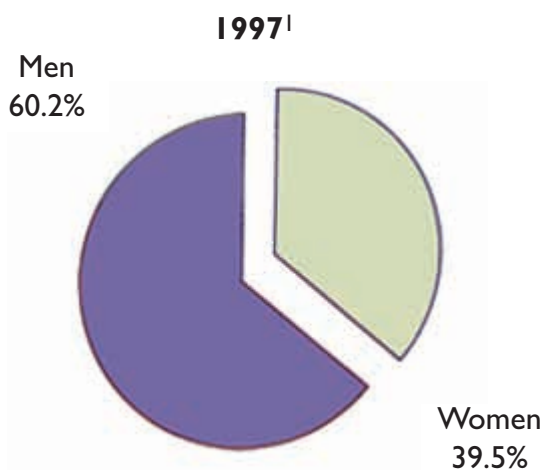
Agencies in functional areas traditional for women - health, labor/human resources, public welfare/employment security, civil/human rights, and education - continue to have the highest concentration of women department heads. At the same time, nationally, the highest number of women exercising executive leadership in any functional area is in the budget/finance/administration category. In this somewhat nontraditional area for women, governors across the country have appointed 81 women, of whom the highest number, 15, head up departments of administration. Ten women are chief executives of management and budget agencies.

Top Advisors

Glass Ceiling A Formidable Barrier for Women Top Advisors

Over the 11-year period from 1997-2007, the percentage of women exercising policy influence in governors' offices increased by a mere 2.4 percentage points. By 2007, the total number of white women in governors' offices in all 50 states increased by only 16. For African American, Latina, American Indian women and women in the Other group, the gain in numbers was stunningly low: 1, 3, 3, and 1 respectively. Nationwide, Asian American women lost three positions.

	1997 ¹		2007	
	#	%	#	%
Total	522	100	542	100
Men				
White	282	54.0	274	50.6
African American	15	2.9	21	3.9
Hispanic/Latino	6	1.1	17	3.1
Asian American/Pacific Islander	8	1.5	3	0.6
American Indian/Native Alaskan	3	0.6	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	314	60.2	315	58.1
Women				
White	178	34.1	194	35.8
African American	17	3.3	18	3.3
Hispanic/Latino	5	1.0	8	1.5
Asian American/Pacific Islander	5	1.0	2	0.4
American Indian/Native Alaskan	0	0.0	3	0.6
Other	1	0.2	2	0.4
Total	206	39.5	227	41.9



¹ Due to some missing racial/ethnic data, percentages do not total 100% and numbers do not sum to the total.

Policy Leaders

Substantial Progress Still to be Achieved in Gubernatorial Appointment of People of Color

Listing of Selected States for Appointees of Color, 2007¹

Top 14

State	# Appointees of Color	Total # of Appointees	% Appointees of Color	% People of Color in Population	Rep. Ratio
Kentucky	4	21	19.0	10.6	1.80
Massachusetts	19	71	26.8	19.5	1.37
West Virginia	2	31	6.5	4.8	1.34
Montana	4	33	12.1	9.6	1.26
Pennsylvania	9	42	21.4	17.0	1.26
Hawaii	15	23	65.2	57.4	1.14
Wisconsin	5	33	15.2	13.4	1.13
Tennessee	8	34	23.5	21.4	1.10
Michigan	10	44	22.7	20.9	1.09
New Jersey	12	30	40.0	36.8	1.09
Washington	10	45	22.2	20.8	1.07
Ohio	6	38	15.8	15.9	0.99
Kansas	6	40	15.0	17.1	0.88
Illinois	12	45	26.7	33.8	0.79

With respect to race and ethnicity, 14 states (29.2%) have achieved representativeness at the .75 level or higher (1.0 = full representativeness). Eighteen states (37.5%) are still below the half way point in achieving full representativeness. In eight states, the representativeness ratio is below .25.

Bottom 8

State	# Appointees of Color	Total # of Appointees	% Appointees of Color	% People of Color in Population	Rep. Ratio
Wyoming	0	30	0.0	10.7	0.00
New Hampshire	0	28	0.0	5.7	0.00
Idaho	0	42	0.0	12.0	0.00
Louisiana	1	28	3.6	36.4	0.10
Indiana	1	46	2.2	15.0	0.14
Utah	1	33	3.0	15.9	0.19
Alabama	2	31	6.5	30.1	0.21
Connecticut	2	37	5.4	24.3	0.22

¹ States with less than 5.0% people of color in the population are not included in this analysis. Data Source: American Community Survey, 2006.

Ranking of States - State Data on Women Appointed Policy Leaders

State	1997				2007			
	% Women Policy	% Women in Population	Rep. Ratio	1997 Ranking	% Women Policy	% Women in Population	Rep. Ratio	2007 Ranking
Alabama	19.0	52.1	0.37	47	25.8	51.7	0.50	46
Alaska	32.1	47.3	0.68	12	44.4	48.3	0.92	5
Arizona	29.3	50.6	0.58	22	35.1	50.1	0.70	23
Arkansas	21.6	51.8	0.42	41	30.2	51.2	0.59	33
California	28.4	49.9	0.57	23	42.1	50.2	0.84	10
Colorado	25.0	50.5	0.50	34	32.4	49.6	0.65	30
Connecticut	19.4	51.5	0.38	45	48.6	51.6	0.94	3
Delaware	28.6	51.5	0.55	25	37.5	51.4	0.73	18
Florida	19.2	51.6	0.37	46	37.0	51.2	0.72	20
Georgia	14.0	51.5	0.27	48	27.8	50.8	0.55	38
Hawaii	25.9	49.2	0.53	28	34.8	49.8	0.70	24
Idaho	38.7	50.2	0.77	8	23.8	49.9	0.48	47
Illinois	25.8	51.4	0.50	32	35.6	51.0	0.70	25
Indiana	28.3	51.5	0.55	26	34.8	51.0	0.68	26
Iowa	32.3	51.6	0.63	16	33.3	50.9	0.65	27
Kansas	23.5	51.0	0.46	37	27.5	50.6	0.54	40
Kentucky	25.9	51.6	0.50	31	28.6	51.1	0.56	35
Louisiana	23.8	51.9	0.46	38	21.4	51.6	0.42	49
Maine	29.2	51.3	0.57	24	29.0	51.3	0.57	34
Maryland	39.0	51.5	0.76	10	27.8	51.7	0.54	41
Massachusetts	32.0	52.0	0.62	17	45.1	51.8	0.87	7
Michigan	26.1	51.5	0.51	30	36.4	51.0	0.71	22
Minnesota	32.3	51.0	0.63	15	37.0	50.5	0.73	17
Mississippi	30.8	52.2	0.59	19	27.6	51.7	0.53	44
Missouri	33.3	51.8	0.64	14	28.0	51.4	0.54	39
Montana	40.7	50.5	0.81	5	54.5	50.2	1.09	1
Nebraska	30.8	51.3	0.60	18	41.5	50.7	0.82	12
Nevada	48.6	49.1	0.99	1	44.8	49.1	0.91	6
New Hampshire	41.7	51.0	0.82	3	42.9	50.8	0.84	8
New Jersey	41.2	51.7	0.80	6	43.3	51.5	0.84	9
New Mexico	26.5	50.8	0.52	29	37.5	50.8	0.74	16
New York	21.5	52.0	0.41	42	33.8	51.8	0.65	29
North Carolina	41.7	51.5	0.81	4	28.0	51.0	0.55	37
North Dakota	26.7	50.2	0.53	27	41.7	50.1	0.83	11
Ohio	20.5	51.8	0.40	43	31.6	51.4	0.61	31
Oklahoma	6.9	51.3	0.13	50	27.3	50.9	0.54	42
Oregon	38.6	50.8	0.76	9	39.7	50.4	0.79	15
Pennsylvania	25.9	52.1	0.50	33	26.2	51.7	0.51	45
Rhode Island	22.7	52.0	0.44	39	28.6	52.0	0.55	36
South Carolina	20.0	50.8	0.39	44	37.5	51.4	0.73	19
South Dakota	34.8	50.8	0.68	11	16.7	50.4	0.33	50
Tennessee	30.0	51.8	0.58	21	41.2	51.3	0.80	14
Texas	24.4	50.7	0.48	35	26.9	50.4	0.53	43
Utah	24.2	50.3	0.48	36	30.3	49.9	0.61	32
Vermont	45.5	51.0	0.89	2	48.3	51.0	0.95	2
Virginia	40.0	51.0	0.78	7	33.3	51.0	0.65	28
Washington	32.6	50.4	0.65	13	46.7	50.2	0.93	4
West Virginia	7.7	52.0	0.15	49	41.9	51.4	0.82	13
Wisconsin	29.7	51.1	0.58	20	36.4	50.6	0.72	21
Wyoming	21.4	50.0	0.43	40	23.3	49.7	0.47	48

State-by-State Listing of Appointed Policy Leaders (#s) [M=Men | W=Women]

	White		African American		Latino/ Latina		Asian American/ Pacific Islander		American Indian/ Native Alaskan		Other		Total		Total	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W		
Alabama	22	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	8	31
Alaska	12	11	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	15	12	27
Arizona	19	9	2	1	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	24	13	37
Arkansas	26	12	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	30	13	43
California	24	21	4	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	24	57
Colorado	19	10	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	23	11	34
Connecticut	18	17	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	18	37
Delaware	18	11	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	12	32
Florida	24	13	5	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	17	46
Georgia	22	8	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	10	36
Hawaii	5	3	0	0	0	0	9	5	0	0	1	0	0	15	8	23
Idaho	32	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	10	42
Illinois	20	13	4	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	29	16	45
Indiana	29	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	16	46
Iowa	23	12	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	12	36
Kansas	24	10	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	11	40
Kentucky	13	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	6	21
Louisiana	22	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	6	28
Maine	22	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	9	31
Maryland	22	4	3	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	10	36
Massachusetts	33	19	4	9	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	39	32	71
Michigan	23	11	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	28	16	44
Minnesota	17	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	10	27
Mississippi	18	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	8	29
Missouri	16	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	7	25
Montana	15	14	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	15	18	33
Nebraska	22	15	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	17	41
Nevada	15	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	16	13	29
New Hampshire	16	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	12	28
New Jersey	10	8	2	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	17	13	30
New Mexico	17	11	1	1	11	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	30	18	48
New York	40	16	5	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	24	71
North Carolina	14	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	7	25
North Dakota	14	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	14	10	24
Ohio	22	10	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	12	38
Oklahoma	14	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	6	22
Oregon	31	20	0	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	23	58
Pennsylvania	23	10	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	11	42
Rhode Island	19	5	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	8	28
South Carolina	18	9	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	20	12	32
South Dakota	19	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	20	4	24
Tennessee	16	10	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	14	34
Texas	41	17	6	3	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	57	21	78
Utah	23	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	23	10	33
Vermont	15	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	14	29
Virginia	11	8	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	16	8	24
Washington	19	16	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	24	21	45
West Virginia	17	12	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	13	31
Wisconsin	17	11	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	12	33
Wyoming	23	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	7	30

Notes on Methodology

Original data on policy leaders appointed by current governors were collected from the states via a mailed survey and follow-up phone calls as needed between November 2007 and June 2008. In some cases, we relied on sources outside state government for assistance in data collection. For the purpose of this study, *policy leaders* include the following two cohorts of gubernatorial appointees who develop, influence, and advise on public policy:

1. Department Heads - including heads of departments, agencies, offices, boards, commissions, and authorities.

2. Top Advisors in Governors' Offices - including titles such as chief of staff, government liaison, and press secretary/communications director.

Only persons appointed by current governors and who have policy-making responsibility are included in this report.

The study includes state-based representativeness ratios. These measures document the degree to which different groups are represented as appointed policy leaders. The representativeness ratio (rep. ratio) for women policy leaders, for instance, is calculated by dividing the percentage of policy leader positions to which women are appointed by the percentage of women in the state's population. A representativeness ratio of less than 1.0 reflects the degree to which a group is underrepresented in top policy positions.

Representativeness is achieved when the demographic composition of top-ranking appointees mirrors that of the general population. Representativeness theory is based on the premise that demographic representativeness leads to programs, policies, or decisions that benefit demographically diverse populations.

Additional Project Publications

Saidel, Judith R. and Dalton, Angela Chen. "Gender and Agency Leadership: A 50-State Comparison." Paper presented at the Annual Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy and Management, Washington DC., November 6-10, 2007.

Saidel, Judith R. and Loscocco, Karyn. "Agency Leaders, Gendered Institutions, and Representative Bureaucracy," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (March/April 2005), 158-170.

Saidel, Judith R., Chen, Angela, and Black, Tamika. "Exercising the Power of Appointment: An Analysis of Variation in Gubernatorial Appointments," 7 *NYSBA Government, Law and Policy Journal*, Vol. 42 (Winter 2005).

Saidel, Judith R. and Riccucci, Norma M. "Women State Agency Heads and Their Leadership," *Spectrum: The Journal of State Government*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Winter 2002), 18-19.

Riccucci, Norma M. and Saidel, Judith R. "The Demographics of Gubernatorial Appointees: Toward An Explanation of Variation," *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2001), 11-22.

Riccucci, Norma M. and Saidel, Judith R. "The Representative of State-Level Bureaucratic Leaders: A Missing Piece of the Representative Bureaucracy Puzzle," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 57, No. 5 (September/October 1997), 423-430.

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